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## **ANALYSIS OF THE HYBRID WAR EFFECTS ON THE SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE PRESENT SECURITY CONTEXT**

### **Abstract:**

*In this work, there were described some facts of hybrid war effects on the security of the Republic of Moldova in the present security context. The subject of the work was unveiled by describing the main parts judging from the results of the analysis, elucidate and outline the effects of the multidimensional wars and why not, the hybrid warfare. An important role in this report is the focus on the hybrid war and its parts in a geopolitical context. The work carries also aspects of the levels based on new security threats from the perspective of hybrid war or new hidden conflicts. Currently, in the context of the conflict in eastern Ukraine, taking into account the complex situations arising out of hybrid military actions, guarding objectives of strategic importance require a more practical approach in planning and carrying out the mentioned actions.*

### **Keywords:**

*Strategy, power, conflicts, international relations, hybrid war, Russian Federation, Ukraine.*

We live in a transcendent and dynamic period in which the issue of crises and conflicts is one of the primordial themes in the work of many analysts and researchers in political sciences, but also in international relations. However, it is worth mentioning that at this stage the field of research is not exhausted, and a number of scientific investigations can be carried out in this direction to better elucidate and outline the effects of the multidimensional wars and why not the hybrid warfare.

Currently, the term “hybrid war” is used by Western experts to designate the war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Thus, through the “hybrid” component, which has the etymon in the “hybrida”, which means

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mixing, joining. Also hybrid is the organism or cell that, as a result of genetic metamorphoses, has obtained a new form. For the current characterization of the contradictions between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, the term “unconventional warfare”, “irregular warfare”, “compound warfare”, or war sponsored by the state, virtually all forms of war that refer to the presence of military conflict, the involvement of non-military means, which often have nothing common with classical military confrontations<sup>2</sup>.

The means used by the Russian Federation against Ukraine have not been completely conceptualized either by native researchers or by Westerners. The genesis of the formation of the concept of “hybrid war”, the stages of development, the components, as well as the main directions remain the focus, and will be finalized<sup>3</sup>.

In a geopolitical context, “hybrid war” is a new concept, used especially in the field of Special Forces operations, which combines the practice of the tough resilience of threats to international security with the lessons learned from the struggle against extremism of state or non-state subjects. “Hybrid war” is driven both by forces that tend to weaken or overthrow a government, act both within the state or area, and by outside forces.

The actions of the outside forces consist in supporting and converting the followers to the preparation of operative support, the impact on the economy and the social sphere, the coordination of diplomatic efforts, and certain protest actions.

For this purpose, Special Forces, research forces, criminal groups, information and psychological influence on the masses, the use of the whole range of technological innovations are involved. On a general level today, the term “hybrid war” means the relationship between the belligerent parties, referring to the incidence on international, regional security in general, and on the national oversight of a particular state.

Polemology try to include this into more or less theorized categories. Thus, for the action in the Crimea and in the South-East of Ukraine, they launched the concept of “hybrid war”.

In this paper, we analyze the effects of the hybrid war on the security of the Republic of Moldova in the current security context, given the degree of influence of the great powers on the phenomenon. There are also various instruments and mechanisms that make it possible to achieve the hybrid war phenomenon.

Starting from the broadest definitions of hybrid warfare accepted by academic communities, “hybrid war” is that war fought by one of the

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<sup>2</sup> H. Bucur-Marcu, *Războiul hibrid – prolegomene (pentru publicul larg – și nu doar!)*, <[www.powerpolitics.ro/razboiul-hibrid-prolegomene-pentru-publicul-larg-si-nu-doar](http://www.powerpolitics.ro/razboiul-hibrid-prolegomene-pentru-publicul-larg-si-nu-doar)>, (4.10.2017).

<sup>3</sup> S. Cebotari, „Războiul Hibrid”. *Unele Considerațiuni*, “Revista Militară”, No. 1(13)/2015, p. 4.

belligerent parties by both conventional military means and non-conventional or non-military means simultaneously.

Lately, state security is increasingly confronted with a new type of threats - hybrid threats. In the opinion of the specialists, the hybrid character of the new security threats must be seen on two levels:

- organizational level - both state and non-state actors use hybrid threats when the situation and conditions impose it;
- level of methods and means - the actors involved use both conventional and unconventional means combined with the requirements of success.

In the opinion of specialists, the concept of “hybrid warfare threats” is a sophisticated combination of unrestricted activities, characterized by decentralized leadership, simultaneous military and non-military activities, combining traditional and asymmetric, terrorist actions and criminal methods, of the complex operational environment conditions<sup>4</sup>.

Hybrid threats highlight the organization and means of the actor that appeals to them, successfully combining strategic influence with decentralized execution<sup>5</sup>.

Thus, in 2011 “NATO's BiSCCC” concept, “hybrid threats” are determined as threats created by the adversary that have the capacity to use and adapt traditional and non-traditional means at the same time to achieve their own goals and interests<sup>6</sup>.

In actions that would destabilize the situation, the aggressive state undertakes the following actions:

- The search for sources of sponsorship of the protesters, and later of the military formations both from the outside and inside forces;
- Determination of protesters capable of participating in protest actions and actions that are peaceful, non-violent, which then become larger, turning into actions of force, which can evolve into civil wars;
- Determining slogans, as close as possible to the real demands of protesters and social groups, whose actions can be used to overthrow the leadership;
- Determining political groups and preparing leaders able to lead the protesters;
- Prepare in special camps for fighters for force actions, organize mobilization centers abroad and ways of introducing mercenaries;
- Ensure opposition support and expansion in the area, primarily from the sources of mass information both within the country and abroad. An

<sup>4</sup> N. Albu, *Influența procesului de globalizare asupra securității naționale a Republicii Moldova*, Doctors Thesis, Chișinău 2007, Biblioteca Națională a Republicii Moldova, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> A. Gurău, *Terorismul de sorginte fundamentalist islamic-risc asimetric la securitate*, Universitatea „Babeș Bolyai”, Cluj Napoca 2015, p. 122.

<sup>6</sup> J. D. Lewis, *The Islamic State: A Counter-Strategy for a Counter-State*, Washington 2014, p.78.

important role is a support from international organizations and the international community;

- Organizing network management structures, monitoring the situation in the area.

In the Republic of Moldova, the preoccupation with the phenomenon of hybrid war is a real one, since its negative implications, due to the presence of the Transnistrian conflict, corruption, unstable political situation, money laundering, drug trafficking, human and weapons trafficking play a significant role in the development of international terrorism.

I consider it extremely important to study in depth the phenomenon of hybrid war for the simple reason that being close to Ukraine, which is bounded by this scourge at the time, we have a real platform to study and research current events.

A hybrid war is very difficult to avoid as far as counteraction is concerned, it is possible through effective policy, transparency, effective communication with the population, and the demonstration that power is able not only to reform but actually to explain all parts of this phenomenon.

Hybrid war rises, whether we want or not, questions about hiring rules, war laws, and the rights of combatants on the battlefield. Of course, they are not upgraded to the new form of war, on the contrary, the use of unregistered, unassembled soldiers and the intervention of the so-called "green men" have introduced the tools to use gaps in international law, a position that also facilitates the avoidance of responsibilities.

This is the new type of war, lawfare which involves speculating international law in order to take advantage of the capabilities and dominant position held for its own national advantages.

Still speaking about the Republic of Moldova and the hybrid war, we can mention a number of risk factors, which allow for the development and comfortable metamorphosis of the "tension scourge" in the region.

Our state, Republic of Moldova, is a neutral, independent and sovereign state, on the one hand, and on the other hand a state buffer, a gray area, a state in which a frozen conflict, actively supported by the Russian Federation, the presence of the state army foreign to our territory, we are neighbors with Ukraine, all favor tension and conditions favorable to the development of the hybrid war in the region.

The implications of the hybrid war for Eastern Europe are not limited to Ukraine, and Russia is already looking towards the Republic of Moldova, the West has no reason to believe that the Russian Federation limits its plans for Eastern Europe to Ukraine, and the Republic of Moldova is the next point on Moscow's list, more frequently warns more officials from the Pentagon and NATO<sup>7</sup>.

The lack of free press is another major problem in the Republic of Moldova that favors the emergence of a hybrid war. This highlights the danger

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<sup>7</sup> S. Medar, *Hybrid warfare in Ukraine*, <<http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com>> (01.03.2018).

brought by the media controlled by a small group of politicians and businesspeople, and the state needs strong and independent journalists with one goal: to provide objective and rigorous accounts of current events.

It is well known that only the independent press can educate the population and fulfill its duty of "the fourth power in the state". The monopoly-controlled and controlled regime of an oligarchic regime, or even more specifically owned by one person, leads us to the idea of deliberately creating an artificial field favorable for speculation and bringing the state into the conception of a maïdan and subsequently to concrete actions for offensive hybrid actions.

Also, following the problems faced by the Republic of Moldova, there is also the risk of the 4GW scourge, which refers strictly to the confrontation of societies within states rather than to their armies, the fight in PsyOps - psychological operations, including terrorist tactics and tough insurgency, through the extensive use of terror against the civilian of that society, and certainly by using the enemy's strengths against himself, such as making use of the inertia of the state's decision-making systems, or the reduced ability to move on the ground, difficulties in deploying troops and handling in urban areas and populated environments, low levels of flexibility and adaptation to irregular warfare and tactics involving the use of human shields<sup>8</sup>.

In the opinion of the analysts, the succession of a pro-Kremlin president to the leadership of the Republic of Moldova opens new horizons of Russian influence in this country, including through foreign policy options, creating the perception of a bicephalic power, to which various "power" loyal to Russia: access to the Russian market, the status of migrants, the expanded role of the Russian church, the hybrid power, etc. Although they can no longer fund the separatist regime as it did a few years ago, Russian officials would like to solve the viability of this militarized enclave by attracting political forces from the Republic of Moldova into the federalist project, forcing the Republic of Moldova to accept the reintegration price the separatist region by giving up the EU, denouncing the agreements signed in 2014, and securing a veto power status for the separatist regime. Moscow could also camouflage its intentions by adopting transitional laws that would recognize the elements of sovereignty for the separatist regime<sup>9</sup>.

Another weak point of the Republic of Moldova, which can lead directly to the emergence of a hybrid war, is the phenomenon of corruption, political

<sup>8</sup> I. Chifu, *Război hibrid, "lawfare", război informațional. Războaiele viitorului*, <[https://adevarul.ro/international/in-lume/razboi-hibrid-lawfare-razboi-informational-razboaiele-viitorului-1\\_56f281ab5ab6550cb8246783/index.html](https://adevarul.ro/international/in-lume/razboi-hibrid-lawfare-razboi-informational-razboaiele-viitorului-1_56f281ab5ab6550cb8246783/index.html)> (1.10.2017).

<sup>9</sup> R. Turcan, *Războiul hibrid al Rusiei împotriva Republicii Moldova. Pregătirea de către Federația Rusă a unor acțiuni care urmăresc discreditarea forțelor pro-europene din Ucraina și Republica Moldova*, <<https://cersipamantromanesc.wordpress.com/2017/02/27/razboiul-hibrid-al-rusiei-impotriva-republicii-moldova-pregatirea-de-catre-federatia-rusa-a-unor-actiuni-care-urmasesc-discreditarea-fortelor-pro-europene-din-ucraina-si-republica-moldova/>> (15.09.2017).

instability, economic difficulties, human trafficking, smuggling, and illicit weapons trafficking.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the analysis of the information and sources studied, referring to the hybrid war term, the hybrid phenomenon and its implications on the security of the Republic of Moldova, we managed to identify the specificity of the hybrid war at the present stage by formulating the following general conclusions:

1. Hybrid war has a multidimensional, relevant, complex and highly dynamic character and, depending on the purposes of the power it uses, it finds its targets in favorable territories and areas, from which it can obtain profits and colossal resources;
2. The hybrid war influences considerably, but also encourages in a hidden manner terrorism and separatism, which is an extremely profitable business;
3. Propaganda, economic measures, uncertainties in Transnistria and the presence of Russian troops remain a constant source of concern;
4. In the age of the hybrid war, in which the boundaries between covered agents and non-undercover agents as well as those between war and peace are very difficult to delimit, gangsters will remain a useful weapon in the dispute over Russia and the US, geopolitical Moldova is situated in the midst of these dispositions;
5. In the Republic of Moldova there is a sufficient arsenal of instruments as political parties and Moldovan citizens who have participated and still participate actively in the struggles of Eastern Ukraine, which are a perceptible risk factor in the design of the hybrid war in the territory;
6. The use of Religion and Religious Representatives to promote hidden interests are elements that can lead to the emergence of rigid tensions;
7. The status of neutrality of the Republic of Moldova;
8. An old military doctrine which is not adapted to the requirements of the current security environment;
9. Russian Federation's policy on the near neighbor states and the protection of its citizens in these territories.

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